

A LIBRARY vs. A ROOM FULL OF BOOKS

Check the box in each row that applies to your institution. The left column includes characteristics of a library. The right column includes characteristics of a room with reading and viewing materials. Which column best describes your institution? Which column do you want your institution to fit into?

LIBRARY	ROOM WITH READING MATERIALS
<input type="checkbox"/> Has established policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Is very informal; functions casually and “off the cuff”
<input type="checkbox"/> Managed by a professional librarian, at least part-time	<input type="checkbox"/> Staffed by volunteers and aides; no management is evident
<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are acquired in an orderly and rational manner and further the library’s mission and goals	<input type="checkbox"/> The collections consists mainly of gifts; acquired randomly with no particular purpose or over-arching scheme
<input type="checkbox"/> A professionally recognized classification system is consistently applied to all materials and materials are organized to facilitate bibliographic access and retrieval	<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no classification and cataloging; a simple organizational scheme such as alphabetization is used
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a system for circulating materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are circulated on the “honor system”
<input type="checkbox"/> Has an annual budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Depends on gifts or small, occasional institutional subsidies
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a dedicated space	<input type="checkbox"/> Library operations may be interrupted or curtailed when space is needed for other purposes

Whether you are establishing a library or a space with a collection of reading materials in it, the following must be considered:

- What is the purpose of your endeavor? Who will it serve? Why is it being established? From these questions will come a **mission statement**.
- What will it consist of in terms of the depth and breadth of the collection and the types of materials it will have in it? From this will emerge a **collection development policy**, which includes procedures for accepting and rejecting gifts.
- Who will manage the library and provide services? From this will come **staffing requirements** and **job descriptions**.
- What **annual budget** will be needed for start-up costs and on-going expenditures, including staff salaries?
- What will be circulated (loaned), to whom, for how long? From this will come a **circulation policy**.
- What will be the library’s **operational procedures**: what hours will it be open, how will it be staffed in terms of professional and clerical responsibilities, how will its materials be organized?